Australia in World War 2
Causes of / The road to WW2

• World War One
  – Treaty of Versailles
• Rise of Italian fascism
• Rise of Hitler and the Nazi Party
• Great Depression
• Japanese expansionism
• Anti-communism
• Appeasement
• Militarism
• Nationalism
• U.S. isolationism
Source 1: Locations of Japanese aggression in north-east Asia, 1894–1938
Homework

• Australia in a world at war
• The Axis onslaught
• The Battle of Britain (Aug – Sep 1940)
• North Africa: the Middle East and the Balkans
• The ‘Rats of Tobruk’
• Operation Barbarossa
• Japan enters the war
• Three turning points
  – Battle of Midway
  – Battle of El Alamein
  – Battle of Stalingrad
• The Allied counter-offensive
• Towards victory in the Pacific
Homework

1. Study Source 5.1.
   a) Who were Germany’s allies in Europe at the beginning of 1942?
      • Vichy France
      • Italy
      • Hungary
      • Rumania
      • Bulgaria
b) Which countries did Germany and Italy occupy?

- Poland 1939
- Albania 1939
- France 1940
- Belgium 1940
- Holland 1940
- Denmark 1940
- Norway 1940
- Yugoslavia 1941
- Serbia 1941
- Greece 1941
- Estonia 1941
- Ukraine 1941
- Lithuania 1941
- Latvia 1941
Homework

1. Study Source 5.1:
   c) Which countries stood against Germany?
   
   ... 
   
   d) At this stage of the war, which side appeared to have the advantage?
2. Why are the battles of Midway, El Alamein and Stalingrad considered to be turning points in World War II?
World War 2 and Australia
Declaration of war
World War II begins

- End of Aug 1939, Britain guarantee of protection to Poland – aid against aggression.
- 23 Aug 1939, Stalin signs non-aggression pact with Germany.
- 1 Sep 1939, German invasion of Poland begins.
- 3 Sep 1939, Brit, France, Aust & NZ declare war on Germany.
Where was it fought?

- Began Europe, spread to North Africa, Asia & Pacific (global conflict)
- Battles fought in air, sea, on land.
- Armies fought in hand to hand combat, as large army groups, in snow covered steppes in USSR, burning deserts of N Africa & humid jungles of New Guinea.
THE SECOND WORLD WAR
THE EUROPEAN THEATER,
1942 - 1945

TIMELINE
Sept. 1939
Germany invades Poland, 1 Sept.
Great Britain and France declare war on
Germany, 3 Sept.

1940
Germany invades Denmark & Norway, 9 Apr.
Germany invades Low Countries, 10 May
Dutch & Belgian war ends on Great Britain & France, 10 June
Peasants' revolt in Poland.
Battle of Britain, July-Oct.
German invasion of France, May 10
1st pass of France, 18 June
US Army enters France, 19 June

1941
German invasion of USSR, 22 June
Battle of Kursk, 5-8 July

Battle of Stalingrad, 17 Aug.

Allied troops land in Morocco & Algeria, 8 Nov.

1944
Battle of the Bulge, 16 Dec-

June 1945
Germany surrenders, WWII in Europe ends, 7 May

THE BREAKTHROUGH
The breakout from the Normandy beach head took place in July 1944, when the offensive continued using General Eisenhower's "Breakout" strategy. The Allied forces encountered fierce resistance, but they were able to break through the German lines and advance towards Paris. The German army was forced to retreat, and the Allies captured the city on August 25, 1944. The fall of Paris was a major turning point in the war, as it marked the end of the Vichy French government and the beginning of the liberation of France. The Allies continued their advance towards Germany, and by the end of the war in May 1945, they had liberated most of Europe from Nazi control.
World War Two in Four Minutes - Simulation
Important dates

• 1-3 Sep 1939 – war breaks out in Europe
• 1940 – Australian troops in Middle East, North Africa.
• 1941 – Australian troops in Greece
• 1941 – Robert Menzies resigned, new PM Arthur Fadden (few months later – John Curtin).
• 1941 – HMAS Sydney sunk
• 7 Dec 1941 – Japan attacks Pearl Harbour
• Feb 1942 – Singapore falls to Japanese, Darwin bombed
• March 1942 – Indochina and New Guinea fall to Japanese, General Macarthur lands in Aust.
Important dates

• May 1942 – Battle of the Coral Sea, Japanese submarines found in Sydney Harbour.
• June 1942 – Battle of Midway
• October 1942 – Battle of ‘El Alamein’
• 1943 – Curtin Labor govt. returned
• 1944 – Aust. troops occupy New Guinea, D-day
• May 8 1945 – VE day
• June 1945 – Operation Oboe Six
• July 1945 – John Curtin dies
• Aug 1945 – Atomic bombs dropped, VJ day
Australia in the Second World War

• 3 Sep 1939 – PM Robert Menzies announced beg of Aust’s involvement in WW2 on every national & commercial radio station.

• Almost a million Austs (men & women), served in WW2.

• Fought in campaigns against Italy and Germany in Europe, Mediterranean & North Africa, as well as Japan in south-east Asia & other parts of the Pacific.

• Australian mainland came under direct attack for first time, Japanese aircraft bombed towns in NW Australia and Japanese midget submarines attacked Sydney Harbour.
Australia in the Second World War

- 7 May 1945 – German High Command authorised signing of an unconditional surrender on all fronts
  - War in Europe over
  - Surrender took effect midnight 8-9 May 1945

- 14 August 1945 – Japan accepted Allied demand for unconditional surrender
  - For Australia, WW2 now over.
Early stages

• Royal Australian Navy (RAN) participated in operations against Italy after its entry into the war in June 1940.

• A few Australians flew in the Battle of Britain in Aug and Sep.

• Australian army not engaged in combat until 1941, in Mediterranean and North Africa.
• Following early successes against Italian forces, Australians suffered defeat with the Allies at hand of Germans in Greece, Crete and North Africa.

• June-July 1941 – Australians participated in successful invasion of Syria (Vichy French)

• April – Aug 1941 – Up to 14000 Australians held out against repeated German attacks in the Libyan port of Tobruk (‘Rats of Tobruk’).

• After being relieved at Tobruk, Australian troops (6th and 7th Divisions) departed Mediterranean theatre for war against Japan.
• 9\textsuperscript{th} Division remained to play important role in Allied victory at El Alamein in Oct 1942 before it too left for the Pacific

• By end of 1942, only Australians remaining in Mediterranean theatre were airmen.
Japan – Defending Australia

• Japan entered war in Dec 1941 and swiftly achieved series of victories
  – Resulted in occupation of most of south-east Asia and large areas of Pacific by end of March 1942

• Feb 1942 – fall of Singapore
  – Loss of entire Australian division

• Feb 1942 – bombing of Darwin
  – All RAN ships in Mediterranean theatre, as well as 6th and 7th Divisions, returned to defend Australia.
  – In response to heightened threat, Aust. govt. also expanded the army and air force and called for an overhaul of economic, domestic and industrial policies to give the government special authority to mount a total war effort at home.
Total War
Defending Australia

• March 1942, after defeat of Netherlands East Indies, Japan’s southward’s advance began to lose strength, easing fears of an imminent invasion of Australia.

• Further relief came when first AIF veterans of Med campaigns began to come home and when US assumed responsibility for country’s defence, providing reinforcements and equipment.

• Threat of invasion receded further as Allis won a series of decisive battles: Coral Sea, Midway, Imita Ridge, Kokoda Trail, Milne Bay and Buna
Source 5
The extent of the Asia-Pacific region controlled by Japan by July 1942

Key
- Japanese land expansion
• 1943 – further Allied victories against the Japanese.
  – Australian troops mainly engaged in land battles in New Guinea, defeat of Japanese at Wau, and clearing of Japanese soldiers from Houn peninsula. This was Australia’s largest and most complex offensive of the war and was not completed until April 1944.

• Australian army also began new series of campaigns in 1944 against isolated Japanese garrisons stretching from Borneo to Bouganville.
  – Involving more Australian troops than at any other time in the war.
  – First of these campaigns was fought on Bougainville and New Britain, and at Aitape, New Guinea.
  – Final series of campaigns were fought in Borneo in 1945.
  – How necessary these final campaigns were remains subject of debate.
  – Australians were fighting in Borneo when war ended in August 1945.
• While Australia’s major effort from 1942 onwards directed at defeating Japan, thousands of Australians cont. to serve with RAAF in Europe and Middle East.
  – Although more airmen fought against the Japanese, losses among those flying against Germany were far higher.
  – Bomber Command – 3500 Australians killed, costliest campaign of the war.
• Over 30,000 Australian’s taken prisoner in war, over 39,000 died.
  – 2/3 of Aust. POWs were taken prisoner by Japanese during their advance through south-east Asia in first weeks of 1942.
  – Those captured by German had strong chance of returning home, 36% of prisoners of Japanese died in captivity.
Women

- Nurses went overseas with AIF in 1940.
- However, during early years of war, women unable to make significant contribution to war effort in any official capacity.
- Labour shortages = govt. allowed women to take a more active role in war work.
- Feb 1941 – RAAF received cabinet approval to est. a Women’s Auxiliary Australian Air Force (RAAAF). Navy also began employing female telegraphists, led to est. of Women’s Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS) in 1942.
- Oct 1941 – Australian Women’s Army Service (AWAS) – aim to release men from certain military duties in base units in Australia for assignments with fighting units overseas.
- Outside armed services – Women’s Land Army (WLA) est. to encourage women to work in rural industries. Women in urban areas took up employment in industries, such as munitions prod.